

VZCZCXRO5404
RR RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHJO RUEHMR RUEHRN
DE RUEHTO #1098/01 2811202
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 081202Z OCT 09
FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0825
INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0525
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 MAPUTO 001098

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MZ](#)
SUBJECT: CHARGE MARKS 25 YEARS OF USG AID; CONVENES FIRST
TETE INTER-RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP MEETING

REF: A. MAPUTO 874
[1](#)B. MAPUTO 806

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: The Charge's recent trip to Tete and Sofala Provinces was the third in a series of visits planned to all of Mozambique's provinces to highlight USG assistance successes. In a three-day visit to both provinces, the Charge reviewed health and training facilities supported by the USG, convened what according to all accounts was the first-ever meeting of a diverse representation of religious leaders, consulted with political leaders, conducted radio, newspaper, and television interviews, delivered two speeches at highly visible provincial universities, and conducted a public HIV status test. The Charge also visited one of the largest U.S. businesses in the country, Mozambique Leaf Tobacco, in Tete Province. While the visit was positive, significant additional outreach to the region's significant Muslim community is needed. END SUMMARY.

25 YEARS OF USG SUPPORT

[1](#)2. (SBU) The Charge raised awareness about USG assistance exceeding \$2.2 billion provided to Mozambique over the past 25 years and the anticipated \$2 billion of U.S. assistance Mozambique may see in the next five years through programs including MCC, PEPFAR, and the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI). Greeted by schoolchildren singing about HIV prevention, the Charge visited an abstinence club that incorporates vocational and life skills training, in the provincial capital, Tete city. He also visited a medical training facility where USG financial support provides scholarships to 12 nurses-in-training and a local general medical clinic which receives PEPFAR funding. The clinic was packed with hundreds of patients waiting to be seen, and according to the clinic director, the visit occurred on a slow day.

MLT PROVIDES EMPLOYMENT FOR 120,000

[1](#)3. (SBU) The Charge then visited Mozambique Leaf Tobacco (MLT), a U.S. firm that has invested tens of millions of dollars in the province, provides employment to over 120,000 small farmers, and processes upwards of 50 thousand tons of tobacco per year. After a factory tour, the Charge engaged the senior leadership of the plant in a discussion about possible collaboration on HIV/AIDS and other educational and humanitarian initiatives. In Sofala Province the Charge spoke to PEPFAR partners running HIV prevention programs, visited a USG-financed health clinic at Catholic University, met with business leaders, recipients of USG-funded medical scholarships, and visited participants in USG-funded

microcredit projects.

POLITICAL AND MEDIA OUTREACH

¶4. (SBU) In addition to meeting with the City Council of Tete and approximately 40 representatives of Christian and Muslim institutions in Tete, the Charge completed interviews with Radio Mozambique and Radio SIRT. A roundtable discussion with students at a local business institute was followed by a speech at the newly opened Catholic University campus to a standing-room-only group of approximately 140 journalists, students, faculty and citizens. He called for Mozambicans and the GRM to act transparently and openly in all matters, and encouraged average Mozambicans to reject corruption in every form. The speech was followed by a question-and-answer period which extended the session beyond its scheduled two hours. In Sofala Province the visits included with local business leader Zaide Aly, and interviews with Diario de Mozambique, Savana, Radio Mozambique, and television channel TVM. The university address in Sofala Province was delivered at the newly-formed UniZambeze law faculty, among students studying international law and economics, and culminated with a lively discussion on a broad range of issues from U.S. policy in Africa to macroeconomics.

In addition, the Charge met with 8 local IVLP alumni journalists to discuss events leading up to October's presidential elections and the political atmosphere in the region. His public HIV test at the Beira Central Hospital was covered on two television stations.

MAPUTO 00001098 002 OF 002

RELIGIOUS LEADERS BEGIN OPEN DIALOGUE

¶5. (SBU) On August 25, with the assistance of HAI representatives, the Charge convened what appeared to have been the first ever meeting of a broad swath of religious leaders representing multiple denominations. Approximately 40 leaders attended, and shared perspectives on interfaith cooperation to solve social issues, such as education, violence, HIV/AIDS, and other salient topics. The Charge expressed confidence in the capacity of faith-based organizations to unite around common causes, and called on these leaders to multiply their capacity to solve societal problems by cooperation and coordination. This also provided a unique opportunity to present U.S. initiatives in the region and across Mozambique. After the Charge departed for subsequent meetings, the religious leaders remained for over an hour discussing among themselves the creation of a new structure to organize their efforts, and agreed to meet again a month later.

COMMENT: OUTREACH EFFECTIVE, BUT MORE NEEDED

¶6. (SBU) In the Charge's third visit to the provinces recent months, Post reinforced its key messages of 25 years of USG assistance, the importance of transparency, and reiterated U.S. commitment to partnering with Mozambique rather than simply providing aid. Telling the story of U.S. assistance in Mozambique provides valuable information to Mozambicans outside of the capital, while at the same time providing a forum to encourage Mozambicans to do more to determine their own future. The lack of knowledge about U.S. participation in development initiatives in the provinces, as well as general misconceptions about U.S. policy is notable. The visit to these two provinces undoubtedly successful: each side left with a better understanding of the other's concerns. But travel challenges, geography, and other logistical challenges mean that occasional visits only begin the much needed long-term public diplomacy work that remains.

Post continues to engage audiences in Mozambique's ten provinces with additional visits planned in coming months.
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